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One Hundred Seventeenth Congress
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Foreign Affairs
2170 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
www.foreignaffairs.house.gov

February 26, 2022

The Honorable Antony Blinken
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Blinken,

In the wake of Vladimir Putin's full-scale renewed invasion of Ukraine, a decision no less reprehensible – and deranged – for having been predicted, we write to express our profound concern regarding the safety of American citizens and lawful permanent residents in country, and of the locally employed staff who formerly worked at the now-shuttered Embassy Kyiv.

Although we acknowledge and appreciate the efforts the State Department has taken in recent weeks to warn Americans to seek commercial transportation options to leave the country, we also fear some Americans, for a variety of reasons, were unable or unwilling to evacuate. We are urging the Department, now that the temporary consular facility in Lviv has closed, to use whatever remaining means possible to conduct outreach to these priority groups. Given reports of Vladimir Putin's "kill lists," it is not premature to think that Americans could be targeted at any second.

Additionally, in light of the Biden administration's disastrous withdrawal from Afghanistan last year, we have to wonder the extent to which the State Department has begun working with other federal agencies and private, non-governmental actors to assist with complicated, ongoing logistical and diplomatic challenges, some of which may implicate American citizens. Refugees are already beginning to flee into neighboring countries, and it is imperative that we surge whatever humanitarian resources we have at our disposal to assist with this exodus. In addition,

we should explore ways in which we can help Ukrainian government officials and their families through new and/or existing visa categories, and rapidly expediting their cases.

We are encouraged to hear that, unlike in Afghanistan, the administration has taken proactive steps in neighboring countries, like establishing the 24-hour Welcome Center in Przemyśl, Poland and increasing consular staff at embassies in Hungary, Moldova, Poland, Romania, and Slovakia. But now that fighting has begun and Russian forces are present across Ukraine, people's ability to travel across the country to these places is severely limited. And given that Ukrainian forces are now fighting for their lives, reliance on them to assist with evacuations is a pipe dream, which means any remaining Americans face the same dire prospects as their foreign brethren.

To have a fuller picture of the current warzone, we request updated information as follows:

- Based on the embassy's F-77 form, enrollments in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP), and other sources of information, what is the Department's best current estimate of how many American citizens, American lawful permanent residents, and locally employed staff remain in Ukraine?
- What outreach to locally-employed staff (LES) has occurred since the beginning of the invasion? What requests have LES made, and what is the Department doing to honor those requests?
- How many individuals presently residing in Ukraine have requested assistance from the State Department since January 24 (when the Department began urging American citizens to leave Ukraine), and in which of the above groups do they fall?
- What resources from the Bureaus of Consular Affairs (CA) and Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM), as well as the U.S. Agency of International Development (USAID), are being surged to address the refugee crisis that is beginning to emerge?
- What are current plans for humanitarian assistance in Ukraine?
- What guidance do you have for Americans whose family members are currently experiencing problems when applying for expedited visas in third countries like Poland? Based on correspondence we have had with constituents, some of these family members' visa applications were in the pipeline well before the invasion began. Are their cases being prioritized now?
- Finally, what is the Department doing, in consultation with USCIS, to facilitate travel to third countries, including the United States, for Ukrainian government officials whose lives are now in danger?

Sincerely,



Michael T. McCaul
Ranking Member
House Foreign Affairs
Committee



Steve Chabot
Member of Congress



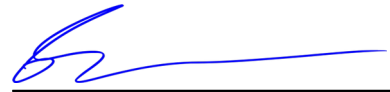
Joe Wilson
Member of Congress



Darrell Issa
Member of Congress



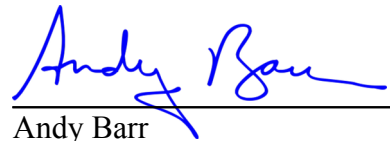
Lee Zeldin
Member of Congress



Brian J. Mast
Member of Congress



Tim Burchett
Member of Congress



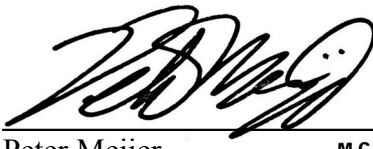
Andy Barr
Member of Congress



Daniel Meuser
Member of Congress



August Pfluger
Member of Congress

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Meijer'.

Peter Meijer M.C.
Member of Congress

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N. Malliotakis'.

Nicole Malliotakis
Member of Congress

A stylized, handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Y. Kim'.

Young Kim
Member of Congress